**Evaluation**

An inexpensive shapes box using recycled materials was chosen as an inexpensive early learning product that is educational and interesting for children to use.

It was planned to use small recycled objects as the basis for the activity. It was very challenging to find suitable objects and using only found objects was not very technologically challenging. So it was decided to use a jigsaw to cut shapes out of recycled wood. The wood needed to be light and of a tight grain that would not splinter. The shapes were sanded to smooth the edges. It was decided not to paint the wood, but to use a vegetable oil finish. Olive oil was chosen because it does not go rancid easily and the strong flavour would deter children from putting the shapes into their mouths.

There were some challenges cutting out the shapes using the jigsaw. The main one was safely holding the wood steady whilst it was being cut. The tech studies teacher showed me how to use a bench vice and a clamp. Course sandpaper was used initially to smooth the rough edges, followed by fine sandpaper give a really smooth finish. The shapes were finally brushed with olive oil then rubbed with a soft cloth to rub the oil in and dry the shapes off.

The box was placed over the end of the ironing board with a cutting board underneath before using a craft knife to cut out the shapes providing a very stable surface and ensuring the cut out shapes were accurate. The holes were made a little larger than the shapes to make it easier for the children to be successful.

Wide masking tape was used to cover all of the raw edges in the newly cut shapes to provide some reinforcement before covering the box with contact.

The strength was in the organisation of the project; sourcing the recycled materials, working with the tech studies teacher; adapting the project from the original plan, covering the box with contact smoothly and contacting the shapes inside the box. My main weakness was in the accuracy of the shapes cut.

The main improvement would be to use very regular, recognisable shapes so that children could also learn the names of the shapes as they are playing. These would also be easier to cut as the edges are mostly straight.

Word count: 396